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There is a need both to convince a wider audience of social researchers of the need to address ethnicity within their work, and also to encourage those researchers who already work in the field of ethnicity to reflect on and improve their current practice.⁵

Extending the Parameters of Social Policy Research for a Multicultural Wales

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ROIYAH SALTUS AND CHARLOTTE WILLIAMS

In the two-hundredth edition of *Planet* Neil Evans posed the interesting question: 'are we getting the social science we need in order to understand Wales in an era of devolved government?'¹ This question provokes a complex set of considerations and debates, not least the relationship between government and academia, between knowledge production and policy making and their links with wider social and political movements.² This debate is pertinent to a consideration of the extent to which social policy research might be harnessed toward the Welsh Government's political ambition of equality, more specifically, race equality in Wales.³ The question demands a consideration not only of the nature of the evidence base and its significance to policy making in an era of self-government, but suggests this evidence as fundamental to an understanding of Wales itself.

The attention given to the importance of exploring both the concept, and how best to operationalize ethnicity in research in the UK remains embryonic, in contrast to the USA, for example, where ethnic minority perspectives are a mandatory consideration in all government funded social research. Salway et al.'s review of the state of play in the UK⁴ concluded that:

Salway et al. cite UK-wide evidence⁶ that indicates the majority of social research is focused on the white population and does not consider minority ethnicity as a variable. This immediately begs the question as to whether social research in Wales can engage more wholesomely with these considerations to produce real sustainable change to the wellbeing of ethnic minorities.

In this context we would suggest at least five important justifications for increased engagement with these issues that do not amount to a case for privileging minority ethnicity but argue for it on the basis of principle. First, this contention is based on the self-evident argument that Wales – irrespective of particular locales – is a multicultural society, indeed it is 'superdiverse'⁷ and thus not easily readable as a conglomeration of discrete communities but more an amalgamation of highly differentiated peoples who, for the sake of convenience, we categorize into ethnic minority groups. Although caution is needed when comparing census ethnicity data over the ten-year intervals due to changes and increases in tick boxes, changes to how the ethnicity question is worded and the ethnic categories used, what these data reveal is telling. The 2011 census indicates that the number of people from black ethnic minority backgrounds increased to 135,203 (approximately 4.0% of the total population) since the last census, an increase from 2.1% (61,580) in 2001 and 1.5% (41,551) in 1991.⁸ Since 1991, in Wales there have been steady increases in the proportions of African, Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Chinese people, and increases in the number of people who classified themselves according to one of the several mixed ethnicities categories.⁹ Based on the

latest census, there have been notable increases in these same groups, with the 'African', 'Mixed' ethnic groups and 'Other White' groups being the fastest growing population groups and those under the umbrella of 'Others', including new migrants, also being numerically significant.

Another important particularity is the fact that the ethnic minority populations in Wales remain highly concentrated geographically in south-east Wales cities and moreover continues to comprise great heterogeneity both between and within the different population groups based on socioeconomic status, gender, migration history, employment, skills and language proficiencies. The common denominator, however, is that ethnicity forms one of the major social divisions of modern Britain *sic* Wales, such that it remains important to consider the impact of structural discrimination and racism.¹⁰

Thirdly, a review of the evidence in particular policy fields demonstrates the need for even more fine-tuned data to tell the story of black and ethnic minority groups in Wales. It highlights the limitations of some of the more conventional apparatus of national social surveys and the issues of confidentiality and validity that small and deep data sets present. It highlights a paucity of evidence in some crucial areas of well-being. Linked to this is the oft heard policy discourse of 'Welsh solutions to Welsh social problems', that is, the need for a better understanding of the patterns and causes of issues in as much as they are specific to Wales and Welsh policy making. We need to know more about what the specific factors of place are that contribute to racial disadvantage. Appropriate responses are too often hampered by lack of good quality research in this respect, as this chapter illustrates.

Of equal importance is the fact that research on ethnicity and race cannot be said to be a specialist pursuit. Besides the fact that we all possess an ethnicity, there are important and evident intersections to be considered and to be controlled for if we are to understand at all the role of ethnicity. Thus, rather than over-emphasizing ethnic minority differences and distinctiveness, an

inclusive approach is needed that addresses the role of similarities (for example, in terms of class, locality, gender) as causal/contributing factors. Otherwise we engage in ethnic essentialism that gives ethnicity the fundamental causal role and serves to define research in this area as a marginal specialism, at once peripheral and excluded from mainstream policies.¹¹

Lastly, even putting aside all the legal duties and requirements of responding appropriately to minority populations and all the political aspirations of equality of opportunity in Wales,¹² there must be a political (small 'p') argument that points to researchers' responsibilities towards wider society of which they are a part. It is worth reiterating Wilkinson and Pickett's *The Spirit Level*¹³ dictum on unequal societies: that more inequality is more socially damaging and societies characterized by high rates of inequality have higher rates of distress and lower levels of life expectancy, educational attainment, social mobility and of course trust. These are concerns that affect the population as a whole.

This chapter explores the available evidence on the position of racialized minorities in Wales across a number of key policy domains. The chapter draws on Winckler et al.'s 2009 review¹⁴ of the key equality strands, and Davies et al.'s quantitative analysis of economic inequality in Wales in 2011.¹⁵ We show that in the last decade disparities continue to exist for black and ethnic minority people across a range of policy domains. While more evidence has been gathered over the last decade that sheds light onto the lives of people from ethnic minority groups, we conclude by arguing for the need for a sustained mainstreaming of these concerns within social policy research in Wales.

Health and social care

It remains the case across the UK that disparities exist within the health and social care system, with differences such as 'race', ethnicity, socioeconomic status and geographic location

impacting on the level of access to information, treatment and care, and on the utilization, experience and satisfaction of health and social care provision.¹⁶ In addition, for a disproportionate number of people from black and ethnic minority backgrounds in the UK, poverty and socioeconomic positioning, often exacerbated by (among other things) societal and institutional racism and discrimination, continue to impact negatively on their health and social outcomes.¹⁷ Although research shows that black and ethnic minority groups are diverse in terms of socioeconomic status, language, generation, culture and lifestyles (diversity that is reflected in their health status, disease patterns, lifestyles, social capital and health behaviour), it is clear that a disproportionate number of people from black and ethnic minority backgrounds are at an increased risk of comparatively poor health and reduced access to, and benefit from, a range of health and social care services.

The evidence in Wales is accumulating from a very low starting point. Neither the Welsh Health Survey carried out in the mid-1990s nor the Atlas of Health Inequalities in Wales from 1998 gave any information on ethnic minority population groups. During this period, the NHS Equality Unit study in 1998 found considerable variability in the collection of ethnic data, making any attempt to understand the prevalence and treatment of ill health difficult.¹⁸ What emerged from these studies was a pervasive universalism that permeated service delivery to the neglect of black and ethnic minority people and a paucity of alternative provision.¹⁹ For example, a study conducted in 2000 by the Policy Research Institute on Ageing and Ethnicity (PRIAE) highlighted a major difference between England and Wales being the relative absence of voluntary specialist organizations for older people from minority communities.²⁰

The evidence base on the health and social care needs of the ethnic minority population in Wales, although better than it was a decade ago, nevertheless remains patchy. Access to health and health related services, and explorations on how to improve services remains a research preoccupation.

Recent studies, for example, have sought to identify the health and health promotion needs of black and ethnic minority groups in Wales;²¹ the mental health and treatment needs of black and ethnic minority groups;²² the accessibility of services carers,²³ and the health and social care needs of unaccompanied children seeking asylum.²⁴ What is evident is that these are ongoing issues and there remains an apparent lack of information on access to care for black and ethnic minority populations in Wales.²⁵ A few studies have been undertaken that focussed exclusively on specific groups, for example on the experiences of Bangladeshi patients in primary care settings,²⁶ the incidence of active tuberculosis in children,²⁷ the emotional wellbeing of Bangladeshi mothers living in Wales and their perceptions of the postnatal period,²⁸ the views and perceptions of Gypsy Travellers,²⁹ and the understanding and beliefs of people with diabetes from the Bangladeshi community.³⁰ Although adding to the evidence base, providing insights into the perceptions, experiences and expectations of various population groups, these studies taken as a whole do not represent any concerted effort to bridge the knowledge gap and are more a reflection of the predilections of individual researchers than any strategic approach to addressing health inequities.

Not having a necessary evidence base in which to shape policy and secure funding to develop services and programmes is replicated in the field of social care. In the past decade, statistical reviews³¹ and a number of local, regional and national studies have been conducted, many of which have been commissioned via funding strands within Welsh Government departments. This empirical evidence includes studies exploring the views and perceptions of older ethnic minority groups in terms of their understanding of dignity and their care expectations,³² as well as studies exploring the experiences of carers, the wellbeing of unaccompanied young people, the views of particular Muslim groups, the impact of substance misuse, and domestic violence³³ conducted by

academics and research-active third sector organizations. Among the themes that emerge from this research data are the ongoing high levels of hidden and unmet need, low levels of knowledge of existing services, difficulties in accessing services, the competencies of care professionals, the difficulties in operationalizing the duties and practices underpinning the various equality frameworks, and the policies and practices underpinning health and social care delivery in Wales. Other key challenges included those posed for service providers by the dispersal of minorities across Wales with obvious implications for the design and delivery of services in rural areas.

It is important to note however some large-scale programmes gaining funding during the last decade that have included a specific focus on improving the health and social wellbeing of ethnic minority groups in Wales. These included the Barefoot Health Workers Project, funded by the inequalities in health fund and the Sustainable Health Action Research Programme of the Welsh Assembly Government from 2001 until 2007, which worked with the African-Caribbean, Bangladeshi, Pakistani, Somali and Yemeni communities of south Cardiff to identify health needs and to develop and deliver culturally appropriate activities to address their needs.³⁴ Also funded by the Sustainable Health Action Research Programme was the Triangle Project that worked to support Local Health Alliances in Cardiff, Merthyr and Powys in tackling health inequalities for black and ethnic minority communities, focusing on action research and community engagement.³⁵ Over the last decade there has also been a drive to develop regional and national strategies linked specifically to the health needs of ethnic minority groups (for example, mental health), as well as strategies linked to specific issues such as the needs of refugees.³⁶

There remain gaps, however, in our understanding of the health and social care needs of ethnic minority populations in Wales. In his systematic review of databases and other statistical sources reporting on ethnic groups and their potential to

enhance the evidence base on health promotion, Peter Aspinall identified the major gaps in national Welsh studies, such as the Welsh Health Surveys, and the unreliability of ethnicity data, for example the Patients' Episode Database for Wales (PEDW), in highlighting the needs of black and ethnic minority groups.³⁷ Moreover, a study conducted in 2005 that scoped the then current health and health-related research and clinical practice activity taking place in Wales found that stand-alone research activities account for the majority of activity; not one all-Wales study with a fully representative sample of black and ethnic minority participants was found.³⁸ Recommendations from the study proposed the establishment of a research infrastructure aimed at enabling regional and all-Wales research to be reviewed and prioritized and to provide a dedicated research and development context in which to link issues of ethnicity and race to the key biomedical, clinical and healthcare research under way. Such a programme ran from 2005 until 2010 and represented the first strategic Wales-wide approach aimed at the development of research priorities for Wales's ethnic minority population.³⁹ Although short-lived, the programme offered great potential in providing a coherent infrastructure to underpin research rooted in addressing health and social inequities in Wales.

Housing

Housing is one of the key indicators of social exclusion, impacting on people from ethnic minority backgrounds in Wales, in different ways and to varying extents. A recent exploration of the equalities policy context in relation to housing⁴⁰ reveals a building initiative focussed on the housing needs of ethnic minority groups and other disadvantaged groups. Key developments that have taken place in the last decade include the passing of legislation in relation to the management of groups of people who qualify as being in 'priority need', as well as a range of national strategies and action plans that

focus on specific population groups, including ethnic minority groups, lesbian, gay and bisexual people, disabled people, women, older homeless people, refugees and asylum seekers, Gypsy Travellers and children and young people.⁴¹ This included, in the early 2000s, the development of a requirement of social landlords to consult with black and ethnic minority groups on their housing needs, and of local authorities to have separate housing strategies for ethnic minority groups. More latterly these specific interventions have now been fully integrated.

Research analysing housing statistics identify the impact of the above policies, as well as to explore the housing needs, provision and experiences of ethnic minority population groups. This includes analysis of the 2001 UK census (the latest census figures have yet to be fully analysed). The 2001 data reveal a lot about the family composition of various ethnic groups and indicates that household composition makes a significant difference to the risk of income poverty. In 2001 the majority of households in Wales, irrespective of the ethnic background of the Household Reference Person (HRP), were composed of one family. One-person households are most apparent among Black Caribbeans (approximately 40%) while over a fifth of Bangladeshi households are composed of more than one family, more than three times the rate for households headed by white people.⁴² Married-couple households were the most common type of family composition among all ethnic groups. Mixed Caribbean-headed households have the highest proportion of lone-parent households of any ethnic group, a family type most vulnerable to poverty. Lone-parent households and cohabiting households are least common among households headed by Asians including, Bangladeshi, Indian and Chinese.⁴³

In Wales pensioner households are around a third as common among black and ethnic minority groups compared with white population groups. They are least common for Asian households, including Indian, Chinese and Bangladeshi. The small percentage of pensioner families in many black and ethnic minority ethnic groups indicates that in these ethnic

groups, older people are more likely to live in households headed by younger relatives. Joint and extended family forms are common among Bangladeshi communities. The ageing demographic of most black and ethnic minority groups will mean increasing numbers of pensioner households over time.⁴⁴ However, demographic and generational shifts that occur over time will alter ethnic minority group family structures. It has been suggested, for example, that the tradition of extended families is weakening in Indian and Chinese families.⁴⁵ The impact this may have in terms of people who are already at risk of poverty has yet to be explored.

The data suggest that black and ethnic minority households in Wales are much more likely to be living in overcrowded conditions than the average household.⁴⁶ For all black and ethnic minority groups the proportion of households that are overcrowded is higher than the average and also higher than all white households. Based on the 2001 census, we know that households headed by a person of Bangladeshi origin have the highest proportion of overcrowding (26.9%), while the Chinese ranked third highest among ethnic groups for overcrowding (18.8%). Those from Caribbean backgrounds had higher than average overcrowding but the lowest proportion of people living in overcrowded circumstances of all non-white ethnic minority groups.⁴⁷

Owner-occupation is nevertheless high among some ethnic minority groups. Data from the 2001 census indicate that the Chinese population in Wales ranked the second highest ethnic minority group for owner-occupied housing. Yet the evidence indicates that Chinese people disproportionately live in poorer quality, private rented and often tied accommodation.⁴⁸ Relatively high levels of owner-occupied housing was also apparent among Bangladeshi and Indian people. More people owned houses than rented among Black Caribbeans, yet for Mixed Caribbeans, renting was more apparent than home ownership.⁴⁹ This may reflect the relatively young age structure of this population.

There is some evidence of a growing awareness of the particularities of housing for ethnic minority groups.⁵⁰ Lack of access to information, poorly maintained accommodation and discriminatory practices, alongside evidence of some innovative and effective policies and practices were themes emerging from research on the experiences and views of refugees.⁵¹ What is evident is that the housing circumstances and needs of black and ethnic minority groups is characterized by diversity, with some groups experiencing relative advantage in the housing and labour markets compared with others.⁵² As with other areas explored in this chapter, the evidence base in this policy field remains patchy, a fact exacerbated by the lack of official data or monitoring information, the tendency not to evaluate policy interventions and the lack of research that extends beyond an exploration of specific housing needs to the shifting perceptions and experiences of housing provision and services. The outcomes of the 2011 census provide an important point of comparison and indicate any specific patterning over time.

Education

A lack of qualifications and basic skills can produce negative outcomes in terms of employment, income and standard of living. Educational disadvantage starts from a very young age and is closely linked to one's social economic position as well as shaped by differences such as ethnicity. This has long been accepted by the Welsh Government and its programmes have sought to raise education standards from the very early years; for example, with the introduction of the Scandinavian model of a Foundation Phase for all children between the ages of three and seven prior to the start of the national curriculum. The continuation of a non-selective comprehensive school system, the abolition of testing up to Key Stage 3 (age fourteen) and Welsh baccalaureate are other distinct features of Welsh education. There has also been the establishment of an administrative framework that covers all levels of education

(curriculum development, monitoring and assessment), as well as the activities of the further education, skills and training sector.⁵³

There has also been a concerted effort to promote and embed equal opportunities and diversity within all areas and strands of education and training. In her recent review of education and equalities in Wales, Anita Pilgrim argues that things have moved on significantly over the last decade, in some areas more so than in others.⁵⁴ There has been a raft of legislation and guidance on equalities and education in Wales and in guidance on inspecting primary and secondary schools, equality issues have been thoroughly embedded.⁵⁵ Perhaps of great importance has been the development of a comprehensive capturing and evaluation of statistical data on equalities in education, which allow for a clearer picture of education pathways of different groups of students than was possible a few decades ago, although the robustness and populating of the data sets remains a contested issue.⁵⁶

Pilgrim's 2011 review of education in Wales⁵⁷ reveals that the statistics show a gradual rise in the numbers of school pupils from an ethnic minority background, with higher figures at present in primary schools. She states that in 2006/7, 93.2% of pupils in primary schools were white and 4.9% were from an ethnic minority background.⁵⁸ A similar breakdown is evident in secondary schools (94.2% white and 3.8% from ethnic minorities) and in special schools (93.3% white, 4.4% from ethnic minorities). In terms of attainment, the review draws out several other key facts from the emerging evidence base. This includes evidence published in 2003 to show that ethnic minority pupils in Wales have a lower attainment at Key Stages 1-4 by substantial margins (although there is wide variation between ethnic groups), an English as an Additional Language Association of Wales (EALAW) report that found that low achievement for most ethnic minority groups is more pronounced in secondary than in primary school, and figures compiled by Welsh Assembly Government figures for 2007

that indicated that a higher percentage of pupils from a Chinese or Chinese British ethnic background achieved the Core Subject Indicator (CSI) than any other ethnic group at all the Key Stages; the Black ethnic group has the lowest percentage of pupils achieving the CSI at each Key Stage.⁵⁹

According to Pilgrim,⁶⁰ it is evident that the issue of skills levels in the wider ethnic minority population also remains of concern. There are marked differences in the qualification level of different ethnic minority groups. While the proportions of people from Caribbean backgrounds and Chinese people without qualifications are close to the white population and the average for Wales, Indian people have substantially fewer people without qualifications while Bangladeshi have substantially more.⁶¹ More recent research by Davies et al.⁶² shows that in both Wales and England, Bangladeshi males and Pakistani females have the highest proportion without qualifications of ethnic groups, while Indian and Chinese males are among the best qualified. Moreover, fewer black and ethnic minority people in Wales hold at least level 2 qualifications than the population as a whole (55% compared with 68%); however, black and ethnic minority people are equally likely to hold degree-level qualifications as the population as a whole.⁶³ Bangladeshi people have the lowest proportion of all ethnic groups who have a higher level qualification, while Indians have the highest proportion of all ethnic groups. Chinese people have a higher than average number of people who have higher level qualifications. Those from Caribbean backgrounds are on the lower end of the spectrum for ethnic groups in terms of higher level qualifications.⁶⁴

Analysis of annual population data for Wales by Davies et al.⁶⁵ shows that the majority of Indian men holding a degree possess a postgraduate degree, while the majority of Chinese men holding a degree possess an undergraduate degree. Indian and Chinese women are similarly well qualified with the highest percentage of graduates among females, but there appears to be a relatively high proportion of Chinese females with

postgraduate degrees. In this study they performed multivariate analysis to determine the individual contribution of a range of factors, including ethnicity, on the relative likelihood of an individual attaining high or low level of educational attainment. They found that in relation to ethnicity, controlling for other factors, such as age, disability, housing tenure and religion (and also mindful that such a substantial variation may possibly reflect the relatively small sample size of some ethnic minority groups), Indian males in Wales are 400% more likely to possess a degree compared with white males.⁶⁶ This differential is larger than that which exists in other areas of the UK where the relative differential is estimated to be 60%. Moreover, they found that among both men and women, Bangladeshi people, as a group that experiences some of the most profound disadvantage in Wales, are 85% less likely than white people to have a degree.⁶⁷

These recent analyses, conducted by Pilgrim, Davies et al. and others indicate clearly that educational attainment among ethnic minority populations varies and that attention must be given to the differences and similarities within, as well as between, ethnic groups. In terms of primary and secondary education, research conducted in the last decade has highlighted ongoing concerns regarding educational attainment, evidence of ongoing barriers faced by students,⁶⁸ inadequacies in terms of ethnic monitoring in schools and in the training and confidence among teachers in terms of cultural diversity and dealing with racism.⁶⁹ More research is clearly needed on early years education. A key theme of many of the studies is the relationship of poverty to educational attainment, which must be of concern.⁷⁰

Labour market participation

Educational achievement is fundamentally linked to labour market participation but so too are the types and nature of economic opportunities available. Over a decade ago, the statistical profile on the labour-market participation of ethnic

minorities indicated for both ethnic minority men and women lower economic activity rates as compared with whites, less likelihood of being employed, higher levels of self-employment than whites, higher rates of unemployment and high youth unemployment.⁷¹ A comparison with evidence from contemporary Wales reveals a similar picture of disadvantage for many ethnic minority groups. In the Davies et al. study,⁷² with the exception of the Black Caribbean group, the male full-time employment rate fell below those classed as white, with self-employment rates among the Pakistani working-age population, and to a lesser extent those also of the Bangladeshi working-age population, notably higher than those of the white population, and also notably higher than in other parts of the UK. This may be a reflection of a lack of employment opportunities in Wales, the particular settlement patterns in Wales, or the strategies and underpinning social networks and pathways to employment undertaken by those from ethnic minority backgrounds.⁷³

In general women are disadvantaged in the labour market and there is more dramatic variation in employment between ethnic groups when considering females. Data from the 2001 census indicated that Caribbean and Chinese women were more likely than white women to be in the labour force, while Indian women had similar rates of economic activity compared with white women overall. Bangladeshi women were shown to have a lower than average participation rate with less than a quarter of Bangladeshi women aged 16–74 in the labour force and the highest rate of unemployment of all ethnic groups.⁷⁴ Both Chinese and Indian women had a substantially higher than average rate of self-employment; Bangladeshi women had a slightly higher than average rate while women from Black Caribbean backgrounds had lower than average rates of self-employment.⁷⁵ Today, in almost all population groups, women face an above-average incidence of non-employment. This is particularly the case for some ethnic minority groups in Wales, notably women of Indian,

Bangladeshi and Pakistani and Chinese ethnicity.⁷⁶ Women from these backgrounds are also at a greater risk of being exposed to economic disadvantage and poverty because they tend to engage in a range of unpaid work activities that revolve around caring within the home and this has implications for financial security in later life with regard to pensions and savings.⁷⁷

Evidence suggests that younger UK-born Bangladeshi women are increasingly accessing higher education and valuing paid employment while still retaining a strong sense of family, but there is some evidence that these women still face discrimination in the labour market.⁷⁸ For older women, a number of factors may contribute to their relative economic inactivity including their first generation immigrant status, lack of British qualifications and fluency in English, and lack of accessible educational opportunities.⁷⁹

There are particular vulnerabilities incurred for children of black and ethnic minority families living in Wales given the nature of economic activity. For example, households in which there are dependent children but no economically active adults may be more at risk of child poverty.⁸⁰ Over a fifth (21.9%) of black and ethnic minority children, compared with 13.6% of white children, live in households in which the head has not worked for some time, or has never worked. This figure rises to a quarter for children from Caribbean households and is around one fifth for the Bangladeshi ethnic group but is lower for Indian (9.1%) and Chinese (7.6%) households.⁸¹ About two fifths of all dependent children have household heads from the lowest occupational groups (semi-routine and routine occupations) or who are out of the workforce, exceeding half of Caribbean children and reaching nearly three fifths for Bangladeshi children.⁸² In contrast, only a quarter of dependent Indian and Chinese children live in such households. Indian and Chinese children are most likely of all ethnic groups to live in households with two or more economically active adults. Caribbean children are more likely than most groups to live in households in which there are no economically active adults.⁸³

The evidence suggests a horizontal segregation of the labour market for black and ethnic minority groups. Representation of ethnic minority groups in various sectors and occupations in Wales indicates that particular black and ethnic minority groups tend to be overwhelmingly concentrated in certain sectors. Winckler et al.'s review revealed that ethnic minority populations tend to be concentrated in sectors associated with poor terms and conditions and low pay, such as health and social care (20.4%), hotels and catering (16.9%) and in wholesale and retail trade and repair of motor vehicles (16.8%).⁸⁴ So, for example, over a third of Indian women and approximately a fifth of Black Caribbean populations work in the health and social care sector. A large proportion of this group is employed in public sector services and as a consequence vulnerable to the impacts of recession. The majority of employed Chinese and Bangladeshi men and women are heavily concentrated in the hotels and catering sector and nearly a third of the Chinese population work in skilled trade occupations. Interestingly, however, the proportion of ethnic minority groups working in professional careers is higher than for the white population and slightly higher for black and ethnic minority men and women working as managers or senior officials. People of Indian origin are especially likely to work in professional occupations.⁸⁵

What is evident overall is that employment prospects in each minority community relate to a range of factors, including migration histories, the perception of employees of particular minority groups, the economic and cultural resources of that community and the geographical or local labour-market influences on demand for employees.

Discussion

From this brief review of the range of policy domains it is possible to identify a number of challenges facing researchers and policy-makers in the coming decade. It is evident that

there is a heightened awareness of the issues of race and ethnicity on the political agenda and an apparent commitment on the part of politicians to equality mainstreaming as key to the development of policy strategies.⁸⁶ The Welsh Government's programme for government (2011-16)⁸⁷ commits the Government to advance equality of opportunity and to tackle discrimination. The Welsh Government's Strategic Equality Plan⁸⁸ details how the Government is fulfilling the general duty in the Equality Act 2010 and the Wales-specific equality duties. The Strategic Equality Plan sets out outcome-focused equality objectives that put the spotlight on the practical differences that are needed to be made to people's lives. What remains key is the importance and need to underpin this policy framework with rigorous, linked-up social science evidence that will shape, drive and evaluate programmes of action. How this is done in the context of the key preoccupations underpinning this chapter remains a pressing question. The evidence base is growing and strides are being made in our understanding and knowledge of ethnic minority population groups in Wales, but there are still significant gaps in our knowledge.

We would argue that advances in the evidence base will require mainstreaming of these considerations into the social science research effort *per se*. Research commissioners and funders, including the National Institute for Social Care and Health Research (NISCHR) as the core government instrument of research development in Wales, will need to require those they fund to address ethnic minority impacts, alongside other equality dimensions, within the context of their research considerations. That does not mean that they will all have to include a specific ethnic minority dimension to their research but it does mean that they will have to justify the research design against such considerations, that is, to know when and how to include an ethnic minority dimension in their work.⁸⁹

Beyond these mainstreaming issues there are clearly considerations and challenges posed by pragmatic obstacles, capacity,

specificity and attrition of evidence to consider in relation to the state of play of research on race and ethnicity. Limited capacity on all fronts means that race/ethnicity specific research in Wales will struggle to be more than an interesting sideline. The strength of the caucus of researchers interested in these issues will always be self-limiting as will the capacity at grass-roots level. If you place this within the broader picture of black and ethnic minority research networks across the UK there remains cause for concern. The exercise conducted by the Centre for Evidence in Ethnicity, Health and Diversity (CEEHD) highlights the fact that in England at present there are very few established and centralized sources of best practice guidance and evidence or established standards and professional support. Attempts at local and regional level in England to develop networks and establish groups to share information and best practice have, for the most part and for a number of reasons, been short lived.

We are mindful that responding to ethnic diversity is a complex issue not least because of competing definitions of ethnicity. Ensuring standards and consistent definitions between different data sources is not straightforward. Further ethnic categories may not be the most useful way of responding to need in certain circumstances and may not be the key determining factor in differential use of and access to services. Social disadvantage itself has a pervasive impact on equal outcomes. What the evidence does highlight is that the ethnic minority experience in Wales is considerably diverse and not coupled with disadvantage and discrimination in consistent ways. It is likely that more sophisticated analysis of the relative position of different groupings will be required to produce effective responses to inequality.

There is a wealth of guidance from the literature on 'doing race research'. As Salway et al. note, 'there is more material that is concerned with how to conduct research on ethnicity than when or why attention should be given to ethnic diversity'.⁹⁰ They further conclude that although the need for social research to respond to multi-ethnic nature of UK society is

increasingly recognized, 'it appears there are few mechanisms currently in place to encourage or support researchers in this direction and little in the way of quality assurance checks within the research cycle'.⁹¹

There is a need to specify and prioritize what it is that is Wales-specific about such research when, for example, conditions such as diabetes, eye care, the incidence of certain conditions in the minority population would be factors irrespective of place, yet issues of access to services, discrimination, quality of service delivery would not. Moreover, clarity is needed on motivations, assumptions, analytical understandings that underpin ethnicity research and the meanings of the ethnic categories in use. What, for example, is the significance of place for understanding minority ethnicities and their wellbeing? Is the geographical limitation of Wales useful in terms of understanding the issues facing ethnic minorities? How can we theorize the intersections between race and other lines of social division within the Welsh context?

What is evident is that tackling ethnic and racial inequality is much more than providing descriptive set of statistics, useful as they are for monitoring trends, changes and gaps. Indeed, over the last decade the Welsh Government has sharpened its focus on development of data collection. However, without monitoring and intervention based on an understanding of why such inequalities persist, what processes or what types of intervention will work to improve the situation, we are in stasis.

Notes

- 1 N. Evans, G. Day and C. Aull Davies, 'Understanding Wales', *Planet*, 200 (2010), 36–49.
- 2 G. Day in 'Understanding Wales', *ibid.*, 37.
- 3 See C. Williams and P. de Lima, 'Devolution, multicultural citizenship and race equality: from laissez-faire to nationally responsible policies', *Critical Social Policy*, 26/3 (2006), 498–522.

- 4 S. Salway, R. Barley, P. Allmark, et al., 'Ethnic diversity and inequality: ethical and scientific rigour in social research', Joseph Rowntree Foundation (2011).
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II

Experiencing Rural Wales

CHARLOTTE WILLIAMS

The link between rural Wales and notions of authentic Welshness has been a long-standing theme in both the academic literature and in popular representations. The Welsh countryside and its imagined characteristics hold a very privileged place in dominant constructions of national identity. Myths of a peaceable and tolerant nation, deeply embedded in the national imaginary are rooted in an idealized Welsh rural community life that summons the trope of the *guerin*, a particular form of localized communitarianism to express the values of egalitarianism, classlessness and internationalism. Myths are of course important to nation building but they also function as a powerful exclusionary force. Welsh imaginings of the countryside as the heartland of Welsh language and culture have fostered not only a sense of cultural purity and cultural homogeneity but have rendered rural territory as the site for the protection of very exclusive constructions of national identity. These 'ideologies of place', as Cloke¹ refers to them, form an important intersection with issues of difference and diversity that can be illustrated through a consideration of 'race' and racialized subjects living in rural communities.

This chapter considers the available evidence on the experience of black and minority ethnic people in rural Wales. From a body of work that primarily focussed on